



**Virginia is for Vaccine Lovers:
*Keeping Virginians Safe, Schools Open, and Our Economy Strong
Through COVID-19 Safety and Vaccines***

Virginia was recently named the best state for business by CNBC for the second consecutive time, our unemployment rate has fallen 63%, from 11.3% at its peak in April 2020 to 4.2%, and the Commonwealth finished the last fiscal year with a \$2.6 billion budget surplus.¹ While Virginia saw an initial decline during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, our GDP has rebounded and is only 0.1% less than at the start of the pandemic. Virginia was also ranked as the 16th least impacted state in the nation.² Since taking office, President Biden has taken essential steps that will get this pandemic behind us. The passage of his American Rescue Plan (ARP) has proven invaluable for Virginia, delivering \$14.3 billion in funding, including \$2.1 billion for local school divisions, hundreds of millions in relief to small businesses and \$77 million for COVID-19 vaccine programs.³

Terry's opponent, far-right Republican Glenn Youngkin, has not only called this ARP funding "unnecessary," but he also opposes any vaccine or mask requirements. He promised to rescind Governor Northam's vaccine requirement for state employees and the mask order for Virginia schools, and he said that masks would be "off" on "day one" of his administration. He has parroted anti-vaccination rhetoric and encouraged Virginians to take non-medical, non-religious exceptions in order to avoid getting the vaccine, and he has consistently praised Florida governor Ron DeSantis, whose mishandling of the pandemic has led to tens of thousands of students and teachers quarantining and record numbers of COVID cases and hospitalizations. He's even called bills to withhold funding for schools that shut down due to high COVID infection rates "the greatest thing that I've seen."⁴ Just like Donald Trump, who Youngkin says "represents so

¹ CNBC. (07/13/2021). America's Top States for Business. Retrieved from: www.cnbc.com; Thomas, P. (08/20/2021). Virginia Unemployment Rate Drops to 4.2%. Retrieved from: www.wdbj7.com; Martz, M. (07/14/2021). As Economy Recovers, Virginia Revenue Surplus Reaches \$2.6 Billion. Retrieved from: richmond.com

² Ettlinger, M., Hensley, J. (08/20/21). COVID-19 Economic Crisis: By State - GDP Change. Retrieved from: carsey.unh.edu; Ettlinger, M., Hensley, J. (08/20/21). COVID-19 Economic Crisis: By State - Unemployment Rate. Retrieved from: carsey.unh.edu

³ Senator Mark R. Warner. (03/17/21). ICYMI: How Virginia Benefits Under the American Rescue Plan. Retrieved from: www.warner.senate.gov; Virginia House Appropriations Committee. (06/23/21). Virginia's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding. Retrieved from: hac.virginia.gov

⁴ Grand New Podcast. (02/08/21). Episode 41: Virginia Runs on Youngkin. Retrieved from: bearingdrift.com

much of why I'm running," Youngkin refuses to take the pandemic seriously, and he has no plan to protect Virginia from the pandemic.

Unlike Glenn, Terry recognizes that Virginians cannot afford to let our businesses or our schools close due to playing partisan politics with our response to this deadly virus. As the Delta variant continues to spread and we brace ourselves for future variants of this virus, Virginia needs an experienced leader to bring us through this pandemic; a leader that will listen to experts and follow the science. Terry has the experience of rebuilding the New Virginia Economy. As Virginia's 72nd Governor, despite inheriting a massive budget deficit and facing the ongoing effects of the Great Recession and sequestration, Terry made economic development and job creation a priority, announcing over 1,000 economic development deals, creating 200,000 good-paying jobs, growing personal income by 14%, and lowering unemployment in every single city and county, including by nearly 50% in most rural counties.

As Virginia's next governor, Terry will be even more focused on building a stronger post-COVID economy that lifts up every Virginian. He will protect the progress we've made and ensure Virginia is well-prepared to take on the next wave of this virus. As Virginia's next governor, Terry will:

Protect Virginians from COVID-19

New COVID-19 variants are emerging that threaten the safety of Virginia's health and economy. Data show that 80% of recent COVID-19 cases in Virginia are the result of the Delta variant and as other variants make their way to the Commonwealth, it will be critical to increase vaccination rates while monitoring ongoing data to craft and study the effectiveness of public health recommendations. As Virginia's 72nd Governor, Terry made sure Virginia's public health system was well-equipped to respond to future health emergencies. He led our preparation and response to the Ebola outbreak, creating a statewide command group and a \$2 million response fund for the fight against Ebola before a single case even reached Virginia. By the end of his term, Virginia was one of the top three states in the nation in terms of preparedness for future health emergencies.⁵ This work will only continue as Virginia's next governor. As governor, Terry will:

- **Launch a Statewide "Virginia is for Vaccine Lovers" Campaign.** Unvaccinated Virginians are 9.2 times more likely to contract COVID-19 and more than 10 times more likely to die from the virus.⁶ Governor Northam has made tremendous progress, but only 57% of Virginians are fully vaccinated, and only 37.9% of the population in Southwest Virginia is fully vaccinated.⁷ The Delta variant continues to cause the vast majority of new infections, and infection rates remain high.⁸ This is particularly true in regions of the

⁵ National Health Security Preparedness Index. (2020). 2020 Index. Retrieved from: [nhspi.org](https://www.nhs.gov)

⁶ Virginia Department of Health. (9/3/21). COVID-19 in Virginia: Case Rates by Vaccination Status. Retrieved from: www.vdh.virginia.gov

⁷ Virginia Department of Health. (9/3/21). COVID-19 in Virginia: Vaccine Summary. Retrieved from: www.vdh.virginia.gov; McGee, D. (08/17/21). COVID-19 Cases Rise by 400% in Southwest Virginia. Retrieved from: [heraldcourier.com](https://www.heraldcourier.com)

⁸ Dry, E., Rapp, N. (08/21/21). The Delta Variant Causes 83% of U.S. COVID Cases. See the States Where It's Most Prevalent. Retrieved from: [fortune.com](https://www.fortune.com)

state with low vaccination rates, where case counts have increased almost 700%.⁹ Recent data also indicate that 75% of Virginia’s hospital beds are occupied, which stresses our health care system and could jeopardize a person’s ability to get the care they need.¹⁰ In order to address vaccine hesitancy and get every eligible Virginian vaccinated, Terry will appoint a COVID-19 czar and leverage federal funds from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) to hire and deploy an army of public health workers in areas with low vaccination rates. He will also launch regional vaccination task forces in partnership with local public health experts and community leaders that will utilize targeted outreach and communication strategies to engage directly with Virginians and promote vaccine safety to increase vaccination rates in every corner of the Commonwealth.

- **Ensure health care workers are vaccinated against COVID-19.** Virginia’s health care workers have been on the frontlines of this pandemic since day one, seeing the worst of what COVID-19 can do. They have also risked their health and safety to care for our loved ones and it is only right that we protect these vital workers, their families, and their patients from COVID-19 by making sure they are vaccinated against this deadly virus. Virginia is seeing over 12,000 emergency department visits per week for COVID-like illness, it is essential that our frontline workers are getting the most comprehensive protection against this virus.¹¹ Numerous leading health care organizations like the Association of American Medical Colleges, American Medical Association, American Nurses Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Association for Home Care and Hospice, and over forty others have come forward to call for the vaccine mandate for all health care workers. Governor Northam issued a vaccine mandate for all state employees, and the federal government issued a requirement that health care workers in facilities that get Medicaid or Medicare funding be vaccinated.¹² As Virginia’s next governor, Terry will continue the mandate for state employees and work to ensure health systems are complying with federal vaccine requirements as well.
- **Protect older adults from COVID-19.** Virginians over the age of 60 made up almost 90% of the more than 12,000 COVID-19 related deaths in the Commonwealth since the start of the pandemic.¹³ Nationally and in Virginia, nursing homes were devastated by COVID-19.¹⁴ Even a single preventable death is unacceptable and the Commonwealth must do everything in its power to protect older adults. President Biden has already taken tremendous steps to protect older Americans and as governor, Terry will work to ensure that every nursing home, assisted living facility and other residential facilities serving

⁹ Moore, M., Keeling, J. (08/16/21). VDH: 291 New COVID-19 Cases, 1 New Death Reported in Southwest Virginia Monday. Retrieved from: www.wjhl.com

¹⁰ Johns Hopkins University Coronavirus Resource Center. (09/05/21). Virginia. Retrieved from: coronavirus.jhu.edu

¹¹ Virginia Department of Health. (9/21). ED Visits for COVID-Like Illness (CLI). Retrieved from: www.vdh.virginia.gov

¹² Graff, H. (08/05/21). Gov. Northam Announces Vaccine Requirement for State Employees. Retrieved from: www.nbc12.com; Masters, K. (08/18/21). Most Virginia Hospitals and Nursing Homes Aren’t Mandating COVID-19 Vaccines for Their Employees. Retrieved from: www.virginiamercury.com; The Associated Press. (09/09/21). Key Parts of Biden’s Plan to Confront Delta Variant Surge. Retrieved from: apnews.com

¹³ Virginia Department of Health. (08/21). COVID-19 Data In Virginia. Retrieved from: www.vdh.virginia.gov; Virginia Public Access Project. (08/21). COVID-19 in Virginia. Retrieved from: www.vpap.org

¹⁴ AARP. (n.d.). AARP Nursing Home COVID-19 Dashboard. Retrieved from: states.aarp.org

older Virginians require vaccines for staff.¹⁵ Additionally, the American Rescue Plan has provided hundreds of millions of dollars to support additional resources for older Virginians during the pandemic, and Terry will ensure Virginia's long-term care facilities have the resources they need to implement the CDC's guidelines and protect their residents.¹⁶ If facilities are not adhering to CDC guidelines, Terry will hold them accountable.

- **Follow the science and rely on experts to inform COVID-19 safety measures.** Rebuilding the economy and preventing further damage by the Delta and other emerging COVID-19 variants will require constant and comprehensive monitoring to quickly develop and deploy aggressive public health strategies. Virginia has been fortunate to have a doctor in Governor Northam leading us through this pandemic, and as Virginia's next governor, Terry will continue that work. As governor, he will appoint a COVID-19 czar, and convene a steering committee of public health experts and key stakeholders representing businesses and industries around the Commonwealth to monitor key information such as health conditions, hospital capacity, emerging variants, economic impact, workforce shortages and more. The COVID-19 czar and steering committee will use this data to develop targeted and aggressive public health recommendations that will keep Virginians safe and the Commonwealth's economy open. Terry will also be prepared to swiftly implement these recommendations in order to prevent community spread and avoid hospital overcrowding that has become increasingly prevalent with the rise of new COVID-19 variants.
- **Urge event organizers to require vaccines for large gatherings.** With hospitals across Virginia approaching their maximum capacity due to the more contagious Delta variant, large in-person events pose a high risk to unvaccinated individuals.¹⁷ It is critical that event organizers require proof of vaccination for all large in-person gatherings to prevent high-risk super spreader events. The Virginia Department of Health is working to deploy a tool in the coming weeks that will allow people to easily show proof of vaccination through QR codes,¹⁸ making it a more seamless process for event organizers and businesses to verify vaccination status. As Virginia's next governor, Terry will call on all event organizers to implement vaccination requirements for large in-person gatherings and will provide event organizers with up-to-date information and guidelines to prevent additional burdens and keep attendees safe. Terry will also increase vaccination sites at large events across the Commonwealth to encourage more Virginians to get vaccinated.

¹⁵ Bryant, Blaire; Nicholson, Jack. (08/21). Biden administration announces vaccination requirement for long-term care workers. Retrieved from: www.naco.org

¹⁶ Blue Ridge Leader & Loudoun Today. (05/21). Wexton announces release of \$34 million in American Rescue Plan funding to support Virginia's seniors. Retrieved from: blueridgeleader.com

¹⁷ Lewis, D. (02/23/21). Superspreading Drives the COVID Pandemic - and Could Help to Tame It. Retrieved from: www.nature.com; VDH. (n.d.). Social Gatherings and Public Spaces. Retrieved from: www.vdh.virginia.gov; Johns Hopkins University: Coronavirus Resource Center. (09/10/21). Virginia. Retrieved from: coronavirus.jhu.edu

¹⁸ DeFusco, J. & Cordes, J. (08/10/21). VDH Creating New Vaccine Verification Tool as More Businesses Ask for Proof. Retrieved from: www.wric.com

Keep Schools Open and Safe

The past 18 months have demonstrated how critical it is that our students remain safely in the classroom, and as school divisions across the Commonwealth return to in-person learning we must take the necessary precautions to keep our students and educators safe. Just last month, there were 45 reported COVID-19 outbreaks in schools and universities and another 28 reported outbreaks at daycare and preschool facilities across the Commonwealth.¹⁹ We know the best learning and support happen in the classroom, and keeping students safely in schools is essential to keeping our economy open. As governor, Terry will:

- **Maintain in-person learning by preventing COVID-19 outbreaks in schools.** Governor Northam has demonstrated tremendous leadership and has issued a mask mandate consistent with Virginia law and guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). And we've seen just how important these measures are. Since the start of the school year, school divisions have already experienced dozens COVID-19 outbreaks that have forced temporary returns to virtual learning. As governor, Terry will continue to take action to protect Virginia's educators and students. That is why Terry will continue urging every school division to require educators and school staff to be vaccinated, and host mobile vaccine clinics to get school staff members vaccinated. He will also improve awareness of and access to the Virginia School Screening Testing for Assurance (ViSSTA) program, which provides end-to-end testing support for schools.²⁰ This critical program can provide funding to hire any additional school-based nurses and administrative support staff needed to support COVID-19 testing.²¹ Keeping students and educators safe and in-person will continue to be Terry's top priority as governor.
- **Expand access to child care and out-of-school activities.** The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated how essential access to child care is to a strong workforce. As child care facilities around the Commonwealth shut down temporarily or permanently, caregivers were forced out of the workforce at alarming rates.²² This hurts Virginia families and businesses. In order to keep Virginians in the workforce and our economy open, we must ensure that our children have safe and nurturing environments to grow and learn. As governor, Terry will prioritize growing the child care workforce, and expanding quality child care that is affordable and accessible for all Virginia families. That includes continuing to leverage federal dollars to cover the cost of co-payments for families in need, maintaining loosened restrictions that allow families to access child care assistance while they are seeking work, and exploring opportunities to utilize ARP funding to grow existing programs to accommodate additional children. Terry will also allocate ARP funding to expand access to educational out-of-school programs, because for every child currently enrolled in an afterschool program, four are waiting to be served.²³ Investing in

¹⁹ Virginia Department of Health. (09/03/21). COVID-19 Outbreaks by Selected Exposure Settings. Retrieved from: www.vdh.virginia.gov

²⁰ Virginia Department of Health. (n.d.). Virginia School Screening Testing for Assurance (ViSSTA). Retrieved from: www.vdh.virginia.gov

²¹ Ibid.

²² Bateman, N. and Ross, M. (10/20). Why Has COVID-19 Been Especially Harmful for Working Women? Retrieved from: www.brookings.edu

²³ America After 3PM. (12/20). Virginia After 3PM. Retrieved from: v-post.org

out-of-school time will enable parents to continue working while providing students with new opportunities to learn, connect classroom material to real-life experiences, and get caught up after a difficult year of virtual learning.

Build a Strong Post-COVID Economy

As a result of Donald Trump's failure to take COVID-19 seriously and his active efforts to mislead the public, too many Americans and Virginians have lost their lives and our economy has suffered. During the first two quarters of 2020, the Commonwealth's GDP declined by 8.9% and unemployment hit a high of 11.3% in April 2020.²⁴ Thanks to the strong actions taken by President Biden, Governor Northam and the Democratic leadership, Virginia is recovering faster than expected. However, it will be up to Virginia's next governor to ensure that emerging COVID-19 variants do not shut down the Commonwealth's economy. Terry was a champion for economic development and job creation as Virginia's 72nd Governor, and he will double down on his efforts as Virginia's next governor to attract leading industries and create good-paying jobs in every corner of the Commonwealth. As governor, Terry will:

- **Keep Virginians safely back at work by incentivizing businesses to issue vaccine mandates for employees.** Many Virginia employers have expressed difficulty filling open positions, in part due to safety concerns over contracting COVID-19.²⁵ Workforce shortages have been especially challenging for the leisure and hospitality industries, which report 20% lower employment than pre-pandemic levels and 88,000 unfilled job openings in Virginia.²⁶ Additionally, many of the industries experiencing the largest workforce shortages are also the ones with the greatest increases in workforce mortality rates during the pandemic, including food and agriculture (39% increase), transportation and logistics (28%), and manufacturing (23%).²⁷ In order to get Virginians safely back to work, our businesses fully functioning and our economy booming, we must get every eligible Virginian vaccinated to prevent the spread of COVID-19. As governor, Terry will create a flexible fund with available ARP dollars to incentivize Virginia businesses to require their employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19. This flexible fund will allow businesses facing staffing shortages or other economic hardships to offer bonuses to new employees, reward existing employees, offer paid sick leave, cover mileage and paid time to get vaccinated, offer onsite vaccine clinics for employees and their families and other creative options. Terry will also provide funding for mobile clinics at businesses to make it easier for workers to get the vaccine.
- **Build stronger post-COVID businesses by increasing worker and consumer confidence.** Businesses have suffered tremendously as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and while public health restrictions have been lifted, many businesses are still struggling to make ends meet. Studies show that employees and consumers remain

²⁴ Ettlenger, M., Hensley, J. (08/20/21). COVID-19 Economic Crisis: By State. Retrieved from: carsey.unh.edu; Ettlenger, M., Hensley, J. (08/20/21). COVID-19 Economic Crisis: By State - Unemployment Rate. Retrieved from: carsey.unh.edu

²⁵ Guilford, G. (04/11/21). The Other Reason the Labor Force Is Shrunk: Fear of Covid-19. Retrieved from: www.wsj.com

²⁶ Freehling E. (08/30/21). The Great American Labor Shortage. Retrieved from: www.virginiabusiness.com

²⁷ Chen, Y., Glymour, M., Riley, A., et al. (01/22/21). Excess Mortality Associated With the COVID-19 Pandemic Among Californians 18-65 Years of Age, By Occupational Sector and Occupation: March Through October 2020. Retrieved from: www.medrxiv.org

concerned about safety as they work or patron businesses. In fact, 87% of U.S. consumers say that retailer’s health and safety guidelines play an important role in where they shop and 65% say that they would consider avoiding retailers who don’t enforce health and safety precautions.²⁸ Many businesses are implementing strong public health protocols to protect their business, their workers and consumers. In order to recognize these efforts and increase consumer and worker confidence, Terry will work with public health experts and industry leaders to follow the science, establish best practices and launch a voluntary COVID-safe certification as part of his “Virginia is for Vaccine Lovers” campaign. This certification will help businesses reassure customers that they are taking every possible safety precaution. He will also leverage ARP funding to support local marketing efforts and provide resources and technical assistance to businesses to implement the best practices, including access to branded educational materials, PPE, testing, and mobile vaccine clinics.

- **Bring pharmaceutical research and manufacturing to Virginia.** Virginia has a long history of excellence in manufacturing and research. We must leverage our capabilities to bring life science manufacturing to Virginia, including for vaccines. As we continue to face the effects of COVID-19 and the Delta variant, we must be prepared to address future variants. Researchers at the Virginia universities are already working on a vaccine that will be effective against all variants of COVID-19.²⁹ Terry strongly believes that Virginia should be home to pharmaceutical research and manufacturing to help fight the spread of this deadly disease. During his administration, Terry traveled to San Francisco and helped VCU secure its largest ever private grant of \$25 million from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to create its Medicines for All Institute.³⁰ That visit also led to a Richmond-based startup securing a \$354 million federal contract to expand pharmaceutical manufacturing in the U.S., including ingredients for generic drugs that will be used to treat hospitalized patients with COVID-19.³¹ Since the initial expansion, this effort has led to major life science development and expansion in Petersburg, VA, opening the door to re-shore manufacturing to Virginia.³² As governor, Terry will work to attract major companies to manufacture their pharmaceutical products, including vaccines, right here in Virginia.
- **Ensure that every Virginian has access to paid sick days.** Nearly half of Virginia’s private sector workers do not have access to paid sick days, meaning that people across the Commonwealth are having to choose between getting paid or taking time to care for themselves or their families when they’re ill. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, that is not only unacceptable, it is downright dangerous. A worker taking only 3.5 unpaid

²⁸ Shopkick. (2021). 2021 Shopping Outlook: Most Consumers Say the Pandemic Has Forever Changed Their Shopping Habits. Retrieved from: partners.shopkick.com

²⁹ Hirschheimer, R. (08/25/21). Researchers Across Virginia Working on One Shot to Combat Coronavirus Variants. Retrieved from: www.nbc12.com

³⁰ Admin. (08/30/17). VCU Receives Historic \$25 million Grant from Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Retrieved from: commonwealthtimes.org

³¹ Martz, M. (05/23/20). Phlow Contract Crowns Virginia Push to Become ‘Leader in Innovation.’ Retrieved from: dailyprogress.com

³² Freehling, E. (05/31/21). Petersburg Grows Pharma Manufacturing Hub. Retrieved from: www.virginiabusiness.com

sick days loses a month of family groceries on average, forcing them to choose between their family's wellbeing and the safety of other employees.³³ Without paid sick days, employees coming to work when they are sick can result in an entire business shutting down due to a COVID-19 outbreak, which can cause many other workers not to be paid. Even before the pandemic, a lack of access to paid sick leave caused the U.S. economy to lose \$160 billion per year.³⁴ Furthermore, paid sick days can save employers up to \$1.8 billion in reduced absences.³⁵ As the Delta variant continues to spread rapidly across the Commonwealth, we must take every precaution possible to prevent community spread. As governor, Terry will work with the legislature to pass a paid sick day requirement for Virginia workers during his first legislative session.

³³ Virginians for Paid Sick Days. (n.d.). The Problem: 1.2 Million Virginians Have No Paid Sick Days (Or Paid Time Off). Retrieved from: www.vapaidicksickdays.org

³⁴ Holmes, E. (02/10/21). Coalition of Small Businesses Pushing Senate to Pass Paid Sick Leave Legislation. Retrieved from: www.nbc12.com

³⁵ Ibid